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NUMBER OF ROAD ACCIDENTS DECLINES SINCE 2016: REPORT

There were 4,80,652 accidents in 2016 as against 3,66,138 in 2020, according to a report by the Ministry of Road Transport

ONLY 12% FALL IN ACCIDENT DEATHS

The number of accidents rose every year between 2005 and 2016. But between 2016 and 2020, the number has come down every year, except for a 0.46% rise in 2018, according to 'Road Accidents in India - 2020' report. The number of accidents dropped 23% between 2016 and 2020, but the number deaths fell only 12% to 1,31,714 from 1,50,785

MORE DEATHS PER 100 MISHAPS

- Despite fewer accidents being recorded, their severity has been on a rise. Twenty-one deaths were reported per 100 accidents in 2005, which jumped to 36 deaths per 100 accidents in 2020
- Accident deaths blamed on red-signal jumping increased by a whopping 79% from 266 deaths in 2019 to 476 in 2020

69%
ACCIDENT DEATHS WERE IN THE 18-45 AGE GROUP IN 2020

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TIRUCHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

‘3rd force’ by Vijayadashami: KCR

In a major push to forming a third force, Telangana CM holds talks with Deve Gowda

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

Telangana Chief Minister and patriarch of Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS) K Chandrashekhar Rao (KCR) and former Karnataka Chief Minister HD Kumaraswamy have announced that the third force as an alternative to the BJP and Congress will take concrete shape by Vijayadashami (October 5) this year.

In a major push to forming this alternative force, KCR called on 89-year-old former Prime Minister HD Deve Gowda at his residence on Thursday afternoon for a luncheon meeting followed by a closed-door interaction which included the ex-PM's son Kumaraswamy and grandson Nikhil Kumaraswamy.

Sources present at the closed-door meeting said, "broad-minded discussions" on wide-ranging topics pertaining to political developments across the country were discussed among the four.

Apart from that, KCR and Gowda are said to have discussed the developments in Karnataka over the last six months, especially about the communalisation and polarisation happening in the state.

"We exchanged views on various topics of national importance. It was a candid and cordial meeting," Gowda said after the meeting.

KCR, on arrival, clasped Gowda's right hand with both of his own and bowed his head in reverence while Kumaraswamy, grandson Nikhil and the others looked on even as the Telangana CM presented the former PM a bouquet. KCR was accompanied by TRS Rajya Sabha member Santhosh Kumar, besides MLAs Jeevan Reddy, Jajula Surendra, Krishnamohan Reddy and Rajendra Reddy. Noted actor-turned politician Prakash Rai alias Prakash Raj's was also present as he has been working closely with the TRS lately, sources said.

While Gowda, who has good equations with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, appeared to be his own self, Kumaraswamy seemed more excited by the proposition of the third alternative force. CONTINUED ON: P5

Telangana CM K C Rao with JD(S) leaders H D Deve Gowda and H D Kumaraswamy at thier residence in Bengaluru on Thursday | EXPRESS

‘SUPERSTITIOUS’ PEOPLE LIKE KCR DO INJUSTICE TO PEOPLE OF TELANGANA: PM

Hyderabad: Prime Minister Narendra Modi who was addressing BJP party activists at the Begumpet airport on Thursday in an indirect attack on Telangana CM K Chandrashekhar Rao referred to him as a "superstitious" person. This, he said, would do a lot of damage to society and also render injustice to the people of the State. In this era, it is astonishing that people are steeped in superstition. Such people can never deliver justice to people. Telangana too has such people. Modi also recollected his days as Gujarat CM. P5

We exchanged views on various topics of national importance. It was a candid and cordial meeting

H.D Deve Gowda, JD(S) supremo, after meeting Telangana CM KCR

Centre calls off BPCL privatisation process as most bidders back off

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ New Delhi

THE Centre on Thursday withdrew its offer to sell its 52.9% stake in Bharat Petroleum Corporation (BPCL) after most of the bidders expressed their inability to go ahead citing the volatile conditions in the global energy market.

"The multiple Covid-19 waves and geo-political conditions affected multiple industries globally, particularly oil and gas industry. Owing to prevailing conditions in the global energy market, the majority of Qualified Institutional Investors (QIP) have expressed their inability to continue in the current process of disinvestment of BPCL," said a notification by the Department of Investment and Public Asset Management. A decision on re-initiating the strategic disinvestment process will be taken in due course based on how the situation evolves, it added.

The government had issued the expression of interest (EoI) for strategic disinvestment of BPCL in March 2020. However, due to global pandemic and other geopolitical tensions, it had to extend the EoI submission date multiple times.

According to reports, only three bidders - Vedanta group, Apollo Global Management Inc, and I Squared Capital Advisors - have shown interest in buying BPCL. Among these, only Anil Agarwal-led-Vedanta was in the race as the other bidders reportedly walked out over lack of clarity in fuel pricing.

It may be recalled that Vedanta Group's chairman, in one of his interviews had said that his company was willing to spend $12 billion for the deal.

BPCL's current market value is around $11.4 billion. It owns 19,000 petrol pumps, 6,166 LPG distributor agencies and 61 out of the 260 aviation fuel stations in the country. It has 26 assets in Russia, Brazil, Mozambique, the UAE, Indonesia, Australia, East Timor, Israel and India. The buyer will get 35.3 million tonnes of refining capacity – 12 million tonne Mumbai unit, 15.5 million tonne Kochi refinery and 7.8 million tonne Bina unit.

ED files fresh PMLA case against Maha minister Parab

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Mumbai

THE Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Thursday raided multiple locations of Maharashtra transport minister Anil Parab and others as part of a money laundering probe linked to alleged violation of coastal regulation zone norms in the construction of a resort in the Dapoli beach area of Ratnagiri district.

The ED conducted the raids for more than 12 hours at properties linked to the minister in Mumbai, Pune and Konkan. Parab is a close confidant of Maharashtra chief minister Uddhav Thackeray.

The agency has filed a fresh case against Parab under the criminal sections of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act. His role was already being probed by the ED in another money laundering case against ex-Maharashtra home minister Anil Deshmukh.

Anil Parab

Commenting on the raid, Anil Parab said the resort belongs to one Sadanand Kadam and he has nothing to do with it. The resort is alleged to be releasing untreated sewage water into the sea.

In another development, the CBI arrested Avinash Bhosale, chairman of Pune-based ABIL group, in a corruption case involving Yes Bank's Rana Kapoor and DHFL's Kapil Vadhawan.

WITH THIS ISSUE
CITY'S BEST WEEKEND GUIDE
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34 PAGES, INCLUDING 16 OF [illegible] (TABLOID)

ED chargesheets DKS under stringent money laundering Act

BALA CHAUHAN @ Bengaluru

THE Directorate of Enforcement (ED) has filed a prosecution complaint (PC) against the Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC) President DK Shivakumar and others under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002 before a special court in New Delhi in a 2019 case against the Congress stalwart. According to informed sources, the court, after taking cognisance of the complaint and the investigation conducted by the ED, will now frame charges and the trial will commence thereafter .

Reacting to the development, Shivakumar said, "I have not done anything wrong. I have full faith in the courts and in the legal system. Besides politics, what else is there in the chargesheet?" he asked.

The chargesheet has come at a time, when the Congress party is gearing up for Karnataka Assembly elections in 2023 and the polls for four seats in the Rajya Sabha next month, where Congress and the BJP are expected to fight for the fourth seat.

Shivakumar is getting battle-ready to play a key role in both the elections as the KPCC President.

"Depending on the trial, the court may acquit him or hold him guilty. In case of acquittal his assets that have been provisionally attached by the adjudicating authority under Prevention of Money Laundering Act will be released," said informed sources. CONTINUED ON: P4

IMPRISONMENT OPTION OPEN, SAYS EXPERT

"Provisions under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act are also penal provisions. Under this, the court can impose punishment of imprisonment. Wherever the person is convicted under the provisions of this Act will be barred from contesting elections under the Representation of the People Act," said Advocate PN Hegde.

KPCC chief D K Shivakumar with senior Congress leader and party's Rajya Sabha member from Karnataka Jairam Ramesh in Bengaluru | EXPRESS

NATIONWIDE	MAY 25	MAY 26
Fresh cases	2,824	2,828
Recoveries	1,977	2,197
Deaths	31	18
KARNATAKA	MAY 25	MAY 26
Fresh cases	208	151
Recoveries	124	175
Deaths	0	0

JAB-O-METER
TAKE YOUR SHOT
MAY 25
11,30,219 doses
MAY 26
12,62,771 doses
TOTAL DOSES
1,92,95,87,987

CID grills ADGP Paul in PSI recruitment scam

BALA CHAUHAN @ Bengaluru

The former police recruitment chief in Karnataka, Additional Director General of Police (ADGP) Amrit Paul was on Wednesday and Thursday questioned by the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) in connection with the infamous police sub-inspector recruitment scam in which around 60 people including two police officers of the rank of Deputy Superintendent of Police (DySP), one inspector, other police personnel and 22 candidates, who had cleared the examination have been arrested.

Paul was ADGP, Recruitment, when the examinations were held in October last year for the post of 545 PSIs. Over 54,000 candidates had appeared for the examination across Karnataka. When asked, Paul told The New Indian Express, that the "CID wanted to understand the whole process of police recruitment; from notification to declaration of results. On Wednesday, the Director General of Police, CID had requested me to explain the entire process to the investigating team," said the ADGP. He added that he had spent a couple of hours on Wednesday evening and Thursday with the CID. "They may call me again because recruitment is a complex process and they need to understand it properly to take the investigation forward," said Paul. He was transferred and posted as ADGP, Internal Security Division (ISD) after the scam broke out.

They may call me again because recruitment is a complex process and they need to understand it properly to take the investigation forward

Amrit Paul, Karnataka ADGP

The government had annulled the PSI recruitment following which some successful candidates went to court to seek legal recourse. P4

KERALA MODEL

Cong to adopt Left's 'bucket collection'

RICHA SHARMA @ New Delhi

FACING massive funds crunch ahead of the big fight for 2024, the Congress is looking at the Left's Kerala model of fund-raising where bulk of the party funds are collected from the masses through door-to-door campaign with slips issued against donations.

The idea, suggested by former KPCC chief Ramesh Chennithala, was discussed in detail at the recently held Udaipur Chintan Shivir. "It is being considered seriously. There are some issues, such as how it can be implemented, how to ensure funds management and transparency etc. It will be discussed at the Task Force 2024 meetings," party sources said.

According to an audit report submitted to the Election Commission, the Congress party's income plunged 58% in FY21 to ₹285.7 crore, from ₹682.2 crore in the previous fiscal. In FY19, the party's income was ₹918 crore.

The Congress is facing acute pressure on the money front, especially after the demise of party treasurer Ahmed Patel, who used to handle party funds through his corporate and other contacts. Madhya Pradesh Congress chief Kamal Nath has been also handling funds generation but earnings have nosedived in the Modi regime.

Most of the CPI(M)'s funds come from its Kerala unit and there is a joke in party circles that the central party survives on funds from the southern state.

The general rule for the party is that 70% of funding must be from door-to-door mass-contact funding drive, known as 'bucket collection'.

Bengal proposes to make CM chancellor of Univs

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Kolkata

THE West Bengal cabinet on Thursday approved a proposal to appoint Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee as the chancellor of all state government universities

"Today, the state cabinet gave its consent to the proposal to make the chief minister the chancellor of all state-run universities in place of the governor. This proposal will soon be introduced as a bill in the assembly," State education minister Bratya Basu, who tabled the proposal before the state cabinet, said.

A member of the cabinet said a bill would be introduced in the Assembly to change the chancellor of state universities. "Once the bill is passed, it will be sent to the governor's office for his approval to amend the change as an act. If there is no nod from the governor, an ordinance will be promulgated to amend the change replacing the governor from the key post." West Bengal governor Jagdeep Dhankhar and Mamata have been at loggerheads over a range of issues.

Last year, a row erupted over suggestions that the governor be replaced from the titular post of Chancellor of state-run universities in West Bengal.

Dhankar alleged that the state government was making appointments to the vice-chancellor post in various universities without consulting him, and he is being forced to take a strong view of such developments.

Tamil Nadu government last month adopted two bills to curb the governor's power to appoint vice-chancellors to 13 State universities. In Kerala, a row erupted last year when the state governor Arif Khan complained of political interference in the appointment of vice-chancellors to state-run universities.

EXPRESS READ

Vidhana Soudha to wear deserted look

Bengaluru: On a day when CM Bommai is expected to return to Bengaluru from Davos on Friday, Vidhana Soudha is likely to wear a deserted look as the secretariat staff is going on a strike. P6

ISRO chief calls for role of docs in space mission

Bengaluru: Isro Chairman S Somanath has lauded the role of medical professionals and the need to collaborate more with them to make India'S human space flight mission successful. P5

CRYING FOR ATTENTION

5 yrs, 4 CMs later, Kempegowda centre still unborn

ASHWINI M SRIPAD @ Bengaluru

FIVE years after its foundation laying ceremony and four chief ministers later, the Kempegowda Research Centre at Jnanabharathi Campus of Bangalore University is yet to see the light of day.

Since 2017 — when the foundation stone was laid — four Chief Ministers and three governments have changed, but nothing has happened on the ground to realise the project for which Rs 50 crore was sanctioned by the state government through the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP).

The initiative was taken by the ministers from the dominant Vokkaliga community when the Congress was in power in the state under Siddaramaiah's chief ministership, and the delay in taking it forward has not gone down well with the community leaders in Congress as well as the ruling BJP.

Sources said the issue is set to come up for discussion ahead of Kempegowda Jayanthi celebrations on June 27.

The proposed centre entails a building with architectural aesthetics from the outside, 1500-seating capacity air-conditioned mega auditorium, a museum space including a digital

section, exhibition hall, board rooms, seminar halls and many more. It was even planned to include rainwater harvesting and solar lighting in its design, besides a pond representing Nadaprabhu Kempegowda's construction of tanks in Bengaluru during his regime.

But none of it has materialised. The foundation laying ceremony was done by Sri Nirmalananda Swamy of Adichunchungiri Mutt in September 2017.

Presently, there is a Kempegowda Centre for Humanities and Social Science under Bangalore University. But it does not have its own building, instead it works out of another department.

CONTINUED ON: P4